

Front & Center

at the Michigan Historical Center

Fall 2007

Historic Destinations to get Makeovers

Approximately \$94,000 in combined federal and state grants has been awarded for revitalization and preservation efforts at Idlewild in Lake County.

Founded in 1912, Idlewild was one of a handful of resorts where African Americans could vacation and purchase property before the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibited such discrimination.

Idlewild was among the largest, historically African American resorts ever developed in the United States, and is one of only a handful with the majority of its buildings, structures and physical areas still intact.

"Idlewild is a historical and cultural destination that helps us learn about Michigan and the African American experience in the twentieth century," said Governor Jennifer Granholm. "These grants will help with the restoration of this once-thriving resort destination that so many African Americans once enjoyed, ensuring that the Idlewild experience is preserved for future visitors and future generations."

The grants will allow the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to develop a walking/driving tour to encourage more cultural tourism, develop a cultural resource management plan to ensure appropriate preservation, post five Michigan Historical Markers to illustrate the Idlewild story, and revise the National Register of Historic Places designation to accurately reflect its national significance.

The grants also will allow the SHPO to survey the Mary's City of David complex in Benton Harbor, develop historic context, nominate the complex to the National Register of Historic Places and post two Michigan Historical Markers. The Michigan Historical Center Foundation is seeking grants and contributions to complete the match for the Federal Preserve America Grant.



Governor Granholm greets Idlewild visitors

Photo credit: Kristin Morin, Ludington Daily News

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Governor Announces Awards

Recognizing the important role historic structures play in making Michigan communities vibrant, interesting places to live and work, Governor Jennifer Granholm recently announced the recipients of the 2007 Governor's Awards for Historic Preservation. "Every day historic rehabilitation contributes to the revitalization of downtowns and neighborhoods," Granholm stated. "The 2007 award winners represent the variety of rehabilitation projects that are transforming Michigan communities big and small."

The award program was created in 2003 to recognize outstanding historic preservation projects throughout the state. Individuals, developers, corporations, academic institutions and units of government that have undertaken rehabilitation of historic resources, conducted archaeological excavations, or implemented sound public policy are considered. The awards draw attention to the importance of developing our historic resources and the important role they play in defining our communities.

Nominations are made to the Governor by the State Historic Preservation Review Board in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office, Michigan Historical Center. This year's awards were sponsored by National City, the Christman Company, William E. Rutter and JC Beal Construction.

To see previous Governor's Awards go to www.michigan.gov/shpo.

The 2007 award recipients:

- Floyd and Todd Wright Builders, Main Street Properties of East Jordan LLC, the City of East Jordan, and Presley Architecture for the rehabilitation of the Votruba Grocery and Porter Lumber Company Buildings, East Jordan
- Boilerworks LLC, Hooker|DeJong Architects and Engineers, and the Muskegon Construction Company for the rehabilitation of the Muskegon Boiler Works, Muskegon
- Uptown Developments LLC, G.A.V. Associates Architects, Cornerstone Architects, and Sorenson Gross Construction for the rehabilitation of the First National Bank and Trust Company Building, Flint
- Joe Van Esley for the rehabilitation of the Penney House, Canton
- Bill Swanson for the rehabilitation of 1754 Parker, West Village Historic District, Detroit
- New Amsterdam Activation I, LLC, Quinn Evans Architects, Rossetti Architects, and Jonna Construction Company for the rehabilitation of the Graphic Arts Building, Detroit

Life on the Frontier

Visitors experienced the sights, sounds and tastes of Michigan's frontier at Walker Tavern's Third Annual Frontier Fest, on September 1. The festival featured workshops, craft demonstrations and children's activities. The sounds of bluegrass, country, folk and gospel enlivened the festival grounds from start to close. Traditional craftspeople demonstrated "lost arts," including gourd painting, quilting, leatherwork, spinning, potting, weaving and chair caning. Other vendors sold antiques, collectibles and watercolor paintings.

In August, the barn at the Tavern got a new roof, thanks to the Michigan Volunteers, organized by Ed Brown of Williamston.

Walker Tavern Historic Site is located next to the Michigan International Speedway in the Irish Hills. Fall tours are by appointment only. For more information, call (517) 467-4401 or visit www.michigan.gov/walkertavern.





Dressed as a flapper in the 1920s museum gallery, Annis educates and entertains a young visitor.

Interning at the Michigan Historical Museum

Last winter the Michigan Historical Center kicked off an internship program that placed more than thirty undergraduate and graduate students at its museum sites around the state.

During the semester-long internship, museum staff members mentor students and help them develop leadership, communication and other real-world skills. Interns earn college credit and practical experience to complement their academic studies. They assist the museum staff by performing costumed interpretations, developing and delivering educational programs and exhibits, caring for museum collections, translating visitor materials and conducting research.

Erin Annis, a junior history major at Hillsdale College, worked as a history education intern at the Michigan

Historical Museum in Lansing in the spring. One of her duties was to perform costumed interpretation in the museum gallery. "I was excited to get dressed up and out on the gallery

floors. But it's not just dressing up. I researched the characters, the era in which they lived, issues they dealt with and how they thought and acted."

Annis' internship experiences and interactions with children gave her insight into other career paths. "Previously, I would have never considered teaching, but now I love researching and talking to people about what I've learned."

Currently, the museum partners with twelve different colleges and universities throughout the state. The museum plans to expand the program by joining with new schools and seeking more students from a variety of fields and interests. Gifts to the Michigan Historical Center Foundation can be directed to the intern program.

Michigan Historical Museum internship partners:

Adrian College
Alma College
Central Michigan University
Eastern Michigan University
Grand Valley State University
Kalamazoo College
Lansing Community College
Michigan State University
Northern Michigan University
University of Michigan
University of Phoenix
Western Michigan University

Get your piece of Mighty Mac history with the 104-page *Michigan History* magazine devoted to the history of the Mackinac Bridge.

With stories about life before the bridge, the businessmen who bankrolled it, the fearless workers who built it, and fifty years of Mackinac memories, this publication has it all for just \$10 (plus \$3.50 s & h).

And for the young reader, there's *Michigan History for Kids*, for just \$2.95 (plus s & h).

www.michiganhistorymagazine.com
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Michigan's Deer Hunting Heritage on Display

Since prehistoric times, deer hunting has helped define life in Michigan. While it has evolved over the years from a fundamental means of survival for Native Americans to an enormously popular sport enjoyed by more than 700,000 hunters every year, deer hunting remains integral to Michigan's identity.

"A-Hunting We Will Go: Deer Hunting in Michigan" opened August 4 at the Michigan Historical Museum in downtown Lansing. The exhibit tells the story of deer hunting in Michigan, with a glimpse at its beginnings and a focus on its development into the widespread pastime it is today.

The exhibit touches on Michigan's long relationship with deer hunting—deer camp culture, elite hunting clubs, the Department of Natural Resources and scientific research, Jay's Sporting Goods, the connection between hunting and labor unions, the lumber and railroad industries, and more—plus features artifacts such as tools used by prehistoric hunters and Ted Nugent's loincloth.

Hunters will have the opportunity to add their own buck-bagging stories to Michigan's whitetail lore, as the Michigan Oral History Association invites hunters to share their personal accounts of hunting (which will be recorded and saved) during its annual meeting in November.

The Michigan Historical Museum is located inside the Michigan Library and Historical Center, 702 West Kalamazoo Street, two blocks west of the State Capitol in downtown Lansing. The main entrance and visitor parking are located north of Kalamazoo Street, just east of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Museum hours are Monday through Friday, 9 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.; Saturday, 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.; and Sunday, 1 to 5 P.M.

Admission and weekend parking are free.

The Michigan Historical Museum, the flagship of the Michigan Historical Museum System, is fully accredited by the American Association of Museums.

For more information, visit

www.michigan.gov/museum or

call (517) 373-3559, TDD (517) 373-1592.

Take advantage of the IRA Charitable Transfer Now through December 31, 2007

The IRA Charitable Transfer passed by Congress allows all individuals 70 1/2 or older to transfer up to \$100,000 of IRA assets annually—now through Dec. 31, 2007—for a donation to the Michigan Historical Center Foundation, a gift that will forever support Michigan history. Take advantage of this short window of opportunity provided by legislation. This transfer can be made without initiating any taxes. If married, each spouse is eligible for the tax-free IRA transfer.

This is a wonderful and very simple way for donors to make a year-end gift directly to the Foundation, but we encourage donors to consult with a tax advisor before taking a retirement plan withdrawal.

**Support YOUR Michigan heritage
and make your contribution today!**
(517) 373-2565



A-Hunting We Will Go: Deer Hunting in Michigan

Charity Gala Supports History Education for Children

Kick off this year's holiday festivities and support children's history education by attending the *Jingle Ball*, a premier event organized by the Michigan Historical Center Foundation.

The gala begins Saturday, November 17 at 7 P.M. at the Michigan Historical Center in downtown Lansing (the night after Silver Bells in the City).

Walk across a luxurious red carpet into a world of holiday elegance and international celebration. Dance to live music, savor an array of sumptuous hors d'oeuvres, and enjoy Michigan beer and wine. Start holiday shopping early by bidding on fabulous silent auction items including vacation packages, sporting event and theater tickets, golf and restaurant gift certificates, jewelry and more.

The cost for this spectacular evening is only \$100 per person. Funds raised from the *Jingle Ball* are used to expand award-winning education programs that reach more than 80,000 Michigan students every year. Make your reservation today! Call (517) 373-2565 or visit

www.jingleball.net

Dear Friends,

As we are approaching the holidays and the end of another year in Michigan, I would like to thank you for your generous support of the Michigan Historical Center Foundation! This year donations supported the conservation of photographs, documents and artifacts and the preservation of Michigan's neighborhoods, downtowns and countrysides. Contributions also enabled over 80,000 children to experience their Michigan heritage first-hand with programs like The Big History Lesson.

Because history is such a vital part of our state's future, it is crucial that each of us help to support these efforts. As you consider your year-end giving, we ask that you make a gift to the Michigan Historical Center Foundation that will provide meaningful support for students, teachers and the general public.

It's easy to support the Foundation and lower your 2007 taxes by writing a check to MHCF. Send to P.O. Box 17035, Lansing, MI 48901. Make sure your envelope is postmarked by December 31 and your gift will qualify for a 2007 deduction.

For more information, contact your tax advisor or call me at (517) 335-2796.

Warm regards,



Director

"The Big History Lesson at the Michigan Historical Museum is the best technique I have found in 33 years of teaching to hook students into a love and enthusiasm for their Michigan heritage. They are eager to learn about our state's history because it is like walking into a history book and that interest carries through our studies for the rest of the school year."

—A St. Johns teacher

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June – August 2007

\$1,600 - \$3,000

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Friends of Michigan History
June - August 2007 \$4,066



October

Oct 6 Michigan Harvest Celebration

A fun fall family activity!
Michigan Historical Museum,
Lansing. 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.

Oct 13 Michigan Archaeology Day

Meet and talk with archaeologists, attend a lecture or try your hand at using an ancient spear-thrower. Michigan Historical Museum, Lansing. 11 A.M. to 3 P.M.

Oct 27 Michigan Magic

Let history add a little magic to your life. Michigan Historical Museum, Lansing. 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.

Oct 28 Haunted History: A Spooky Walk Through Time
Don't forget to wear your costume! Michigan Historical Museum, Lansing. 1 to 5 P.M.



November

Nov 3 Jay's Sporting Goods Day
Michigan Historical Museum,
Lansing. 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.

Nov 10 Listening to the Past
Brownie Girl Scouts can earn a Try-It badge. Preregistration required. Michigan Historical Museum, Lansing. 10 A.M. to 3 P.M.

Nov 12 – 21 Double Discount Days at the Museum Store

State of Michigan employees, members of the Friends of Michigan History and the Michigan Historical Museum Docent Guild save 20 percent on purchases. Michigan Historical Museum Store, Lansing.

Nov 17 The Jingle Ball

This spectacular gala promises holiday elegance and a sleighful of fun while supporting award-winning Michigan history education programs. Michigan Historical Museum, Lansing. 7 to 11 P.M.



December

Dec 1 WinterFest: Traditional Winter Sports

Dogsledding, snowshoeing and more. Michigan Historical Museum, Lansing. 11 A.M. to 3 P.M.

Dec 8 WinterFest: Ethnic Festival

Music, dance, arts and crafts. Michigan Historical Museum, Lansing. 11 A.M. to 3 P.M.

Dec 17 – 23 Double Discount Days at the Museum Store

State of Michigan employees, members of the Friends of Michigan History and the Michigan Historical Museum Docent Guild save 20 percent on purchases. Michigan Historical Museum Store, Lansing.



Save the date: 2007 Jingle Ball, Saturday, Nov. 17 at the Michigan Historical Museum.

All funds raised support Michigan History education programs that serve more than 80,000 young students.

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For information, hours of operation and online exhibits visit www.michiganhistory.org.

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